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STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME
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DRAFT REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME MATTERS ON ITS IN-SESSIONAL MEETING HELD DURING THE RESUMED THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

Addendum

A. Disaster mitigation ($50 million)

Summary of the discussion in Committee

1. The Deputy Chief of Humanitarian Programmes, UNDP, made a statement, presenting the updated proposals of UNDP for its assistance in the areas covered by this category, namely:

A.1.	Disaster preparedness and management	$10 m.
A.2.	Emergency relief	$ 7 m.
A.3.	Reconstruction and rehabilitation	$18 m.
A.4.	Refugees, displaced persons and returnees	$ 5 m.

2. Broad acceptance was given to the proposals. However, some delegations urged a clarification of the roles of UNDP and other agencies in the different areas of disaster management, so as to avoid duplication. They also stressed the coordination role of UNDP, the need for it to build up national capacity in disaster management, and to assist in longer-term post-disaster development work.

3. Some delegations seriously questioned the justification for the symbolic $50,000 (A.2., para. 29) provided to Resident Representatives for emergency

relief, and recommended that it be reoriented towards strengthening the coordination and needs assessment role of UNDP instead of for short-term relief. They also urged more work on evaluation of past experience and the impact of the role of UNDP. Some delegations requested that the forthcoming discussion on emergency coordination during the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly should be taken into consideration. Several delegations supported the financing of the Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP). In this context, some delegations stressed the need to train national personnel. Moreover, some delegations made a reference to the forthcoming system-wide study for emergency response. One delegation proposed that UNDP look into the possibility of participating in the forthcoming United Nations Pledging Conference for Chernobyl.

Response of the Administration

4. In reply, UNDP appreciated the support given to its efforts and agreed to incorporate the above views into the future design of its activities. It also stressed that the $50,000 was a modest, although much appreciated instrument for both coordination and resource mobilization, and that its abolition would greatly weaken the ability of UNDP to play a significant catalytic and coordination role. UNDP agreed on the increased emphasis on its information and assessment functions, and on the coordination of the local disaster management team. It was also stressed that only half of the funding for the DMTP was taken from SPR resources. The rest was provided by bilateral donors.

B. Thematic activities ($115 million)

B.1. Poverty eradication and grass-roots participation ($20 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

5. Delegations expressed appreciation for the work undertaken under this category, and particularly for the grass-roots Partners in Development Programme, as well as the strengthening of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) through short-term interventions, and workshops. Many delegations also welcomed the parallel emphasis of UNDP in looking at poverty alleviation at the macroeconomic policy level, and indicated that UNDP had a particular comparative advantage in this area. They stressed the need to develop evaluation indicators relating to popular participation. Some delegations also stressed the need to provide SPR funding to the Domestic Development Service (DDS) of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV). Some delegations questioned the appropriateness of the wide range of proposed activities and suggested a clearer focus in the programme. One delegation reminded the Committee that poverty pockets also existed in middle-income countries. A proposal was also made to take the experience with the Social Dimension of Adjustment programme into account.

Response of the Administration

6. The Administration noted that while satisfactory results had been achieved, attaining impact was a long-term process. In the uphill struggle for poverty alleviation there was no panacea in the current international economic climate. A number of major studies had been carried out recently. The studies were being reviewed so that practical lessons could be drawn. One of the primary ones was the increased need to ensure that macro-level policies were appropriate, so that multiplier effects could be maximized. SPR were considered a most important source of funding for the catalytic activities envisaged.

B.2. Environmental problems and natural resources management ($25 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

7. Delegations welcomed the increased emphasis on the environment given by UNDP and considered that preparations for the forthcoming United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) would be very helpful for enabling Governments to focus on national problems and priorities in that area. They recognized the usefulness of a fairly broad programme proposal, but urged that greater precision should be given to it once UNCED conclusions and recommendations had been made. It was suggested that the mid-term review be based on the outcome of UNCED. Some delegations urged that greater emphasis should be placed on the transfer of technology as a means of alleviating environmental problems, and on promoting twinning arrangements between institutions. They also urged that a clearer division of labour be established between UNDP and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), as well as other United Nations organizations so as to avoid duplication and maximize coordination and complementarity. The role of the proposed Youth Environment Corps vis-à-vis the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme and the Domestic Development Service (DDS) was inquired about.

Response of the Administration

8. UNDP agreed on the desirability to review the programme following UNCED before finalizing detailed proposals in order to reflect fully the outcome in its activities. Mention was made that the new Environmental Management Guidelines were being finalized and should serve as a useful operational tool. It was also stressed that SPR resources should be used as seed money for resource mobilization from other sources and that UNDP headquarters had established an environmental action team with focal points in all relevant units to facilitate backstopping and coordination at the headquarters level. Close collaboration was maintained with UNEP and the need to avoid duplication was fully recognized. Work on the eventual establishment of a Youth Environment Corps would need to take this into consideration.

B.3. Management development ($40 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

9. The importance of management development was stressed by many delegations, and the contributions of the Management Development Programme (MDP) were welcomed. The LDC focus was supported by several delegations. A specific request was made by one delegation for it to be used in facilitating the transition from centrally planned to market economies and in facilitating links between the public and private sectors. Another delegation urged that it be used to strengthen NGOs and other development institutions, and that particular benefits could be provided through promoting networking to facilitate change in management systems and practices.

10. Caution was expressed by one delegation on the need to ensure that SPR funds be used for their supposed catalytic functions and that longer-term management assistance should be provided through the indicative planning figure (IPF) or other funds. Others stressed the need for the programme to assist in the process of strengthening national management capacity in programme implementation.

Response of the Administration

11. UNDP appreciated the support given to the programme and the results obtained to date, as documented in the recent evaluation report submitted to the Governing Council at its thirty-eighth session. With regard to coverage by the MDP of the many varied requests on its limited resources, priority would be given to countries which had not yet benefited from it and where Governments had shown a high level of commitment to management development. With additional resources becoming available during the fifth cycle, and the large number of countries which had indicated that the area of concentration was of particular priority, it was expected that IPF funding would continue or replace former SPR funding in many countries. UNDP welcomed the possibility of learning from the experience of the "Management for Change" programme of one donor, and in promoting and strengthening linkages with other headquarters units, field offices, NGOs and other management institutions.

B.6. Women in development ($8 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

12. Delegations welcomed the increased priority given by UNDP to the area of women in development (WID), and the increased awareness of gender issues. With regard to the use of SPR resources, delegations stressed that those resources should not be used to bolster the UNDP administrative budget. While one delegation considered it appropriate to use SPR funds for strengthening the mainstreaming capabilities of UNDP staff (training, guidelines, etc.), another delegation was against such use of SPR funds.

13. UNDP was urged by several delegations to inform itself of existing surveys done on national WID capacities by other United Nations agencies and donors, to draw on United Nations system expertise for the SPR programme, and to cooperate with relevant programmes undertaken by United Nations system WID offices. They also stressed that assistance in WID should be demand-driven and not donor-driven, and that it should concentrate on building national capacity. The delegation considered that the six activities listed in the programming document should be action-oriented and designed to achieve measurable results. One delegation queried whether a separate WID office in BPPE was still justified. Another delegation emphasized that decision-making at headquarters should take into account the views of field offices and Governments in particular.

Response of the Administration

14. The Administration welcomed the positive remarks about the WID emphasis in UNDP. The Secretariat agreed to conduct broad-based consultations with other United Nations agencies, bilateral donors, UNDP field offices, Governments and others to identify developing countries' WID capacities. United Nations system expertise in WID would be drawn upon for the design of the SPR programme and, where possible, for implementation of some of the activities. The Secretariat confirmed that the SPR resources would be dedicated to building national and regional capacities and not to support the administrative budgets of UNDP or other United Nations agencies.

15. Regarding the six specific activities, it was envisaged that there would be an expansion of the scope of the activities to include things such as twinning of institutions if found appropriate. That could result in attracting other resources and support to carry on once UNDP resources were expended. The Secretariat assured delegations that the decision-making process at headquarters would be, as a matter of course, informed by consultations with field offices and Governments.

C. Other special and/or new activities ($53 million)

C.1. Human Development Report ($5 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

16. The major contribution of the Human Development Report to the intellectual debate on development was commented upon favourably and UNDP was commended for the significant work undertaken in that regard. Two delegations felt, however, that UNDP was deviating from the type of work which a development organization should follow and questioned the elaboration of indicators not apparently and directly linked to development. Some delegations recognized some of the methodological problems involved in such an ambitious and path-breaking exercise and stressed that its concepts needed to be widely internalized. It was also urged that UNDP assistance should be designed so as to ensure that human development considerations were duly taken into consideration.

17. Delegations urged that in the preparation of future reports, the sources of reflection and intellectual inputs should be diversified so as to reflect a wider spectrum of thought on the concept of human development, including through a process of regional consultations. Some delegations questioned and recommended amplification of the success criteria of the SPR proposal (paras. 7 and 8). Other delegations remarked with concern on the apparently high cost of the Human Development Report exercise. Another delegation recommended that since the concept of the Human Development Report was established, an annual report was no longer necessary and that, in future, emphasis should be placed on practical aspects of implementation. The report could therefore be published biannually. Another delegation suggested that the Human Development Report should be submitted for consultations before its publication.

Response of the Administration

18. UNDP reassured delegations that for future reports, sources of information and inputs were being widely diversified, according to language coverage and types of development experience (e.g. NGOs, private and public sectors, the contribution of both men and women etc.), and that regional consultations would be a standard feature of their preparation. Substantial collaboration and exchange of information within the United Nations system was also a feature of the report - 25 United Nations agencies had been associated in the 1992 report, for example.

19. It was agreed that success criteria could be expanded to include (a) the use of human development concepts and analytical tools; (b) a citation index to measure use; and (c) impact evaluation indicators to be devised. With regard to costs, the additional earmarking recommended in the present SPR proposal was caused by the need to strengthen the projection of the report to target audiences, particularly in developing countries unable to pay for it, including universities, government entities and NGOs. It was stressed that the Human Development Report was not an academic exercise but should be considered as a prelude to action, for which the annual choice of major themes would need to reflect priority concerns on the development agenda.

C.2. Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America ($20 million)

Summary of discussion in the Committee

20. While broadly supporting the Special Plan, the Committee discussed a number of activities which it was felt should be included in the Special Plan. Important among these were activities specifically targeted at women, activities concerned to improve governance and efforts to improve coordination among agencies to reduce duplication. Some representatives also expressed the view that the strategy of the Special Plan was too broad and should be focused on a narrower range of activities. Questions were raised concerning the rationale for funding the Special Plan from SPR rather than from the regional

programme. One representative requested that attention be directed towards the linkage between tourism and the environment in order to ensure sustainability.

Response of the Administration

21. It was pointed out that the programme document did not provide a comprehensive and detailed picture of all activities and that under the Special Plan there were programmes focused on women as well as major efforts to ensure coordination and to reduce duplication. It was felt that governance was more appropriately addressed at the national level and a number of ongoing activities were referred to in this sphere under the Management Development Programme. On the need for greater focus, it was stated that the strategy was a rolling scheme, in which emphases changed over time. Thus, it was not intended to undertake activities in all areas simultaneously.

22. It was also suggested that the Special Plan was not a suitable programme for funding from the regional IPF, since it was developed in very specific geopolitical circumstances and with a limited time-frame. In addition, the resources available in the regional programme for Latin America and the Caribbean were very limited. The Administration affirmed its concern with the linkage between tourism and the environment, and stated that mechanisms had been established to consider the linkage systematically.

C.3. United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAAERD) ($20 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

23. Pending the proposed review of UNPAAERD, scheduled for late 1991 some delegations questioned the use of the totality of funds for two regional projects, namely the National Long-Term Perspective Study (NLTPS), and the African Capacity-Building Initiative (ACBI), thus leaving no resources to support other priorities of UNPAAERD which might emerge from the review. Others questioned the use of the SPR funds for these two projects and suggested that they should be financed under the regional IPF. In particular, some delegations recommended that the proposed earmarking for the costs of the ACBI secretariat in Harare should be covered by the regional IPF and not the SPR.

Response of the Administration

24. UNDP replied that in view of the limited resources, the proposal to concentrate SPR resources on two projects was justified in the sense that both were designed to play major catalytic and resource mobilization roles in the process of facilitating long-term thinking, and in strengthening the capacity of institutions which had suffered greatly from declining budgetary allocations and loss of highly qualified personnel. That also justified use of the SPR rather than the regional IPF, although in the case of the ACBI, almost half the UNDP contribution would be financed under the regional programme.

C.4. Drug abuse control/crop substitution ($5 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

25. Opinions differed markedly on the question of approval of this proposal. While recognizing the importance of the theme, some delegations considered that the document contained insufficient information, particularly on the proposed activities and the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and that it needed substantial amplification for approval. Others, while conscious of those inadequacies, considered that the document should be considered as a programme framework and not a detailed project document, and that it was acceptable in principle and should be approved. Notwithstanding the very limited resources earmarked, in comparison with the massive value of the drug trade, the same delegations recommended early approval so as to facilitate subsequent preparatory work of more detailed proposals.

26. One delegation drew attention to General Assembly resolutions on the restructuring of the United Nations system drug control institutions and the substantial information given on the proposed role of those bodies in that high priority area. Given the small size of the proposed allocation and the presence of more substantial United Nations donor agencies in the drug field, particularly the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), some delegations questioned the role of UNDP in the area, and thus of the allocation. UNDP was urged to clarify its future role, particularly vis-à-vis UNDCP.

Response of the Administration

27. The Administration reminded the Standing Committee that the small resources earmarked were designed as a catalytic input into UNDP country programming so as to highlight the need to integrate drug-related concerns into a wide spectrum of development activities, for instance, agriculture, health and education. The reasons for the lack of detail in proposed activities was that discussions were still continuing with other United Nations agencies, and that a clear inter-agency agreement on respective roles in the field was still being developed. It was agreed that the proposed activities would be reviewed in detail, in time for the special session of the Governing Council in February 1992, and that in the meantime, a portion of the earmarking should be approved so as to facilitate the necessary preparatory work.

C.5. HIV/AIDS ($5 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

28. Several delegations stressed the important role UNDP has to play in this field. One delegation raised the fundamental question of the precise links between AIDS and development and of the appropriate role of UNDP in assisting Governments to face the implications of the pandemic. Another delegation

remarked that the document needed to be more specific in its proposals, while another indicated that too many activities were identified for the very limited funds available, and that they were inadequately focused. Greater catalytic thrust was thus required. A number of delegations stressed the importance of close collaboration with WHO/GPA and among all agencies of the United Nations system.

Response of the Administration

29. In reply, UNDP highlighted the very significant social and economic cost of the pandemic in terms of increased burdens on the affected families, especially for child care, together with loss of earning power, labour productivity, revenue from taxes and qualified personnel in all areas of society. It was emphasized that it was a health problem that had serious implications on many areas of the economy. The multisectoral scope and coordination mandate of UNDP, particularly in the context of the WHO/UNDP Alliance, thus gave it an increasingly important role in development aspects. That has been recognized in the fact that UNDP was the largest multilateral donor to the Global Programme on AIDS (GPA), and was playing an important coordination role among agencies which were increasingly having to address the AIDS issue as it affected their respective sectors. UNDP worked closely with WHO/GPA and all activities undertaken with SPR resources would be carried out in collaboration with WHO/GPA.

30. It was also acknowledged that the proposal did cover a large variety of activities. That was necessitated by the range of socio-economic consequences that the pandemic brought out. However, the focus or strategic thread was provided through the modality proposed for the fund, that is, that those resources be used specifically for programme development and to enhance programme effectiveness. SPR resources were thus proposed to facilitate a catalytic and innovative approach.

C.7. World Conference on Education for All ($1.33 million)

Summary of the discussion in Committee

31. One delegation was concerned about the role of UNDP and the inter-agency collaboration process in the light of the Conference and on the apparent contradiction of an emphasis on basic learning needs as well as its compatibility with the promotion of science and technology for different categories of the population. Another delegation noted the extremely limited resources earmarked for a very ambitious programme and wondered how much impact UNDP could actually make. Further questions were raised on the eventual desirability of transferring the proposed training components to other programmes and on the eligibility of specific countries to SPR support.

Response of the Administration

32. In reply, attention was drawn to the major inter-agency collaborative effort being maintained for the promotion of follow-up work to the Jomtien

Conference on Education for All - for instance, through the periodic sponsoring agency meetings and, increasingly, in the context of the new International Consultative Forum, to be convened in December 1991, which would provide a framework for inter-agency consultation and dialogue concerning the integration of follow-up efforts for Education for All.

33. Information was also provided on the integration of science and technology into basic learning needs programmes and on the means of maximizing the impact of the limited resources available - for instance, through catalytic activities (workshops, meetings, consultancies, resource mobilization, etc.). Finally, some fifty actions or priorities for technical cooperation had been identified related to the Jomtien Conference follow-up, some of which would be financed by country IPFs while others could be eligible for SPR on the basis of the catalytic criteria for those resources.

C.8. Private sector development ($4 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

34. Some delegations queried the comparative advantage of UNDP in the area of private sector development, particularly in the areas of capital market development and privatization. It was recognized, nevertheless, that UNDP had had relevant experience for the creation of conducive environments for private investment and for small- and medium-scale enterprises. Further information was requested on UNDP past experience and on significant results which could highlight its particular comparative advantages in those fields. Another delegation suggested that UNDP was in effect providing subsidies to support private sector development, which should normally be covered by the private sector itself. One delegation considered that review of this programme should be postponed until after the Governing Council had had an opportunity to study the report on the subject, which the Administration had been requested to submit to the Council at its thirty-ninth session.

35. Another delegation felt that UNDP assistance to private sector development was wholly appropriate so long as Governments requested it in line with national priorities and was used for capacity-building. It was considered that UNDP assistance could be most useful in helping to provide the appropriate policy environment so that the private sector could play its due role. One delegation expressed its concern that the programme document should not prejudge the report of the Administrator requested by Governing Council decision 91/11, to be submitted at the thirty-ninth session.

Response of the Administration

36. Clarification was given by UNDP that its primary responsibility was to help Governments make the private sector more efficient and to facilitate the development of an enabling environment. Assistance to capital market development should not be considered as a subsidy, since UNDP assistance would be provided in the form of advice to Governments to enable them to fulfil

their responsibilities, either to establish capital markets, or to help them work more efficiently. In that respect, UNDP neutrality could be seen as a comparative advantage.

37. It was acknowledged that the involvement of the agencies, particularly the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in the recent private sector initiatives had been relatively weak, but it was stressed that they had been executing agencies for many past projects related to private sector development, particularly relating to small- and medium-scale enterprises/industries.

C.9. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) ($1.33 million)

38. One delegation sounded a note of caution in warning of the dangers of NGOs becoming excessively dependent on international assistance to the extent that they might become separated from their primary vocations, and thus more dependent on larger-scale sources of assistance. A middle way was thus required which would enable them to retain their identity as well as benefit from whatever UNDP might have to offer. Another delegation was pleased at the response to its written comments, and recommended that it be incorporated into the programming document. Particular appreciation was expressed on the proposals for participatory evaluation. It was nevertheless recommended that UNDP should be constantly alert to the need to progressively phase out assistance to NGOs.

39. A recommendation was also made that UNDP could make a contribution in the area of management development relating to NGOs and that it would be worth considering assistance to regional NGOs, as well as with credit unions and cooperatives.

Response of the Administration

40. UNDP shared the concerns expressed above about the dangers of excessive dependency on larger-scale sources of assistance. UNDP priority was thus to urge NGOs to identify their needs and to do strategic planning. In the process, UNDP had not phased out since long-term support to NGOs was not normally provided. Instead the emphasis was on the provision of short-term punctual support in the form of management support workshops, on both a regional and national basis. Thus, management training received high priority.

41. With respect to assistance to NGOs involved in credit and cooperatives, it was considered that other more specialized organizations were better placed to assist in those areas, and that management training specific to the special requirements of NGOs was being developed by several institutions and would be utilized for those activities.

D. Aid coordination ($35 million)

D.1. NaTCAPs, round-table meetings and UNDP support to Consultative Group meetings ($5 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

42. Concern was expressed at the heterogeneous nature of the programme and the fact that round-table and consultative group meetings were primarly concerned with resource mobilization while NaTCAPs were more concerned with longer-term capacity-building. It was thus proposed that the NaTCAP component of the programme be attached to subcategory D.2. One delegation stressed that emphasis in aid coordination should be placed on strengthening the government's capacity in that area rather than that of UNDP. The primary role of Governments in the process should not be taken over by UNDP.

Response of the Administration

43. UNDP agreed to the above suggestions and to attach the NaTCAP component to the programme for subcategory D.2. It had, in fact, suggested a financial breakdown between round-table and Consultative Group meetings and NaTCAP programmes on a fifty-fifty basis in its response to the comments of one delegation.

D.2. Others, e.g. needs assessment, country programme reviews ($5 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

44. Discussion on the programme was combined with that on the programme for subcategory D.1 described above.

Response of the Administration

45. As indicated above, the proposal to include the NaTCAP component into the programme for subcategory D.2 was accepted. Fifty per cent of the financial allocations would be required for the NaTCAPs and the other 50 per cent would be programmed for round-table and Consultative Group meetings, etc.

D.3. Country programming initiatives

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

46. The response to the written comments by one delegation on the programme was accepted by that delegation. However, a certain contradiction was apparently still highlighted between the handling of the six areas of capacity-building, and the programme approach and should be reviewed. It was also noted that the title of the programme was somewhat misleading since in fact it referred mainly to programming rather than country programming

initiatives. One delegation remarked on the continual lack of clarification about the definition of the programme approach, for which a request was made so that the Governing Council could be better informed.

Response of the Administration

47. The Administration stated that the six areas of capacity-building should be applied as far as possible to all areas of concentration in country programmes. Those in turn should reflect government priorities. It was also mentioned that considerable progress had been made in clarifying both the concept and the operational implications of the programme approach through a recent Workshop on the Programme Approach which was held in Santiago, Chile from 5 to 9 August 1991, and on which the results had been sent to field offices.

48. SPR resources were urgently required to fund pilot efforts in developing programmes at the country level, aimed at advancing more effective programming at the country level. It was stressed that the programmes formulated under subcategory D.3 would not only contribute to a sharpening of the concept of the programme approach but also initiate the application of such an approach in all countries.

E. Programme development ($29 million)

E.1. Project Development Facility (PDF) ($15 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

49. One delegation remarked on the apparent overlap between the purpose of the PDF and the TSS-2 category under the new support cost arrangements and urged that clarification be included in the programme document. Thought should also be given to the needs of monitoring and evaluation.

Response of the Administration

50. It was clarified that the PDF should be for project development and design while the TSS-2 was designed for monitoring purposes. It was agreed to include this clarification in the document.

E.2. Programme evaluation and training ($7 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

51. One delegation gave full endorsement of the programme for subcategory E.2, mentioning that it conformed closely to the guidelines. It also recommended that some thought should be given to the question of monitoring and evaluation aspects of other programmes. Another delegation proposed that UNDP should prepare a longer-term evaluation strategy, to be implemented through an evaluation committee.

Response of the Administration

52. UNDP proposed to submit a report on an evaluation strategy to the Governing Council at its thirty-ninth session (1992). On the question of monitoring and evaluation of other programmes, it was mentioned that the main document provided details on the subject.

E.3. Programme research ($7 million)

Summary of the discussions in the Committee

53. Concern was expressed by some delegations on the understanding they had derived from paragraph 5 of the programming document that UNDP staff might be financed by the SPR for sabbaticals to participate in the research programme. It was also stressed that UNDP should try to strengthen networking, learning from experience, and diffusing results of research already undertaken, rather than initiating major new research activities and potentially duplicating the work of others. Another delegation emphasized the need to put particular attention on using regional or thematic institutions, for instance the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

Response of the Administration

54. Clarification was given that it was not the intention that staff on sabbatical would be financed from the SPR, but rather that staff available for short periods, for instance between assignments, might be able to contribute to the type of research programme proposed. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that the terminology of the programme title was potentially misleading, since it was designed more for programme analysis, with a view to feeding back the lessons of experiences, rather than carrying out research per se. UNDP also wanted to build up its own intellectual and research capacities in the process, but at no cost to the SPR. For instance, regional institutions benefiting from SPR assistance could also help to strengthen UNDP field offices in their respective areas of competence.

F. Assistance to the Palestinian people ($15 million)

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

55. One delegation wished to postpone comments on the programme until the recommendations of a proposed independent evaluation had been completed in late 1991. Another stressed that such a postponement would not be advisable, given the particular sensitivities of UNDP assistance in favour of the Palestinian people as well as the urgent need to maintain continued assistance. Another delegation noted the unique and distinct comparative advantage of UNDP operations through the programme, but questioned the wisdom

of the apparent dispersion of assistance to a total of twelve sectors, of which three would receive only $30,000 per year, largely for practical reasons of management capacity of UNDP. In reply, one delegation underlined the importance of UNDP assistance to all those sectors, even the above three (population - for which UNFPA assistance should be requested - human settlements and culture), due to the dearth of other donors, and the pressing needs in each of the sectors.

Response of the Administration

56. Considering the particular difficulties of the situation, a more strategic approach was recommended. Furthermore, it was proposed to cover the approval of the programme in the context of the decision on the SPR.

III. FUTURE PROGRAMME OF WORK, INCLUDING FIELD VISITS

57. The Assistant Administrator informed the Standing Committee of the arrangements which UNDP had made for the 1991 field visits. As had been agreed at the in-sessional meeting of the Standing Committee held during the thirty-eighth session of the Governing Council, three field visits were to take place in January: one to Africa (Tanzania and Burkina Faso); one to Asia (Bangladesh and Indonesia); and one to the Arab States (Egypt and Morocco). Twenty-one members of the Council had expressed interest in participating. UNDP would be in close touch with the Permanent Missions of those countries concerning logistical questions, the early and detailed elaboration of the programme for the visits, as well as to provide background and briefing material.

58. UNDP proposed to organize field visits in March and September 1992 and would be contacting the heads of the regional groups for nominations for those field visits. UNDP would report to the Standing Committee in February 1992 on the results of those efforts. One delegation suggested that the countries to be visited in 1992 should possibly be selected in accordance with the status of preparation of the country programme.

59. In view of the heavy work programme of the Standing Committee, one delegation suggested that the session in February 1992 be extended by one week. In response to a question from one delegation, the Administration confirmed that the evaluation of the MDP would be made available to the Committee at its session in February 1992. With regard to its future programme of work, the Committee took note of the position embodied in paragraphs 124 and 125 of its report contained in document DP/1991/72.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME MATTERS TO THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

60. At its 14th meeting, on 20 September 1991, the Standing Committee for Programme Matters adopted its draft report.